

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings (Figures 19 and 20) have been amended to add the legend “Prior Art”.

Attachments: Replacement Sheets (Figures 19 and 20)

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 9-13 have been allowed. Claims 1-13 have been amended as a result of this response. No claims have been canceled and new claim 14 has been added. Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 2, 4, 9 10 and 14 and dependent claims 2-8 and 11-13 stand in condition for allowance.

I. Drawing Objections

The Examiner has objected to Figures 19 and 20 because the figures should be designated by a legend such as “Prior Art” when only Prior Art is shown in the figures. Corrected Drawings are being submitted. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

II. Specification Objections

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract as it does not comply with the proper form and length. The Abstract has been amended to comply with the proper form. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner’s indication that claims 9-13 have been allowed. Claims 9-13 have been amended to remove the numeral identifiers within the claims. Claims 9-13 should still be in condition for allowance.

Additionally, Applicants appreciate the Examiner’s indication that claims 2 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants has amended claim 2 to be written in independent form including all of limitations of the base claim. Claims 2 and 8 should be in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kuma et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,775,121). In addition, the Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Imamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,391,616). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Kuma et al. discloses a method and a device for refrigerating fluid by heat exchange. In addition, Kuma et al. describes a device where flat sheets and corrugated sheets are alternatively laminated as shown in Figures 2A and 2B.

Imamura et al. discloses a method of dehumidification utilizing carbon fibers and which employs a cool air flow or cold water obtained through humidification of dry air after the dehumidification. As shown in Figure 4, the dehumidification unit includes moisture absorbing elements formed by corrugation of sheets to provide many air passages and cooling air elements formed by corrugated non-moisture absorbing sheets applied with separate flat non-moisture adsorbing sheets.

Claim 1 has been amended to include an element of claim 10 “side-plate member is formed of an air and moisture permeable material and an exterior surface of said side-plate member is provided with waterproofing means.” Neither Kuma et al. nor Imamura et al. disclose waterproofing means. The element included in claim 10 was indicated by the Examiner as being allowable since the prior art of record including the references listed on the foreign search report fails to disclose of suggest a motivation for using the water-proofing means in combination with the other recited elements. Amended claim 1 should be allowable for the same reasons as claim 10.

In addition, new claim 14 was added and is similar to claim 1 with an additional element of claim 9 “wherein said side-plate members are each formed of an air and moisture permeable material and either or both of exterior surfaces of said side-plate members are provided with waterproofing means.” Neither Kuma et al. nor Imamura et al. disclose waterproofing means. The element included in claim 9 was indicated by the Examiner as being allowable since the prior art of record including the references listed on the foreign search report fails to disclose of

suggest a motivation for using the water-proofing means in combination with the other recited elements. New claim 14 should be allowable for the same reasons as claim 9.

Claim 3 has been amended to depend from independent claim 2 which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, which the Applicants have done.

Claim 4 has been rewritten to be in independent form, in addition, claim 4 has been amended to further clarify that “a surface of said side-plate member which faces said first air ventilation passage supports an absorbent layer.” One example of the absorbent layer being supported by a surface of said side-plate member, which faces said first air ventilation passage is shown in Figure 12 of the present invention (also described in Specification page 26, line 24 to page 27, line 4). Neither Kuma et al. nor Imamura et al. disclose “a surface of said side-plate member which faces said first air ventilation passage supports an absorbent layer” (claim 4).

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claims 1, 3-5 and 14 are clearly distinguishable over Kuma et al. and Imamura et al.. Applicant submits that claim 3 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency on claim 2 and claim 5 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency on claims 1, 2, 4 and 14. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

V. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuma et al. or Imamura et al. in view of Masataka (J.P. Pub. No. 08-313186). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Masataka does not remedy the noted deficiencies of Kuma et al. or Imamura et al. Masataka is only relied upon to teach dependent claim features. This reliance on Masataka fails to make up for the deficiencies of Kuma et al. or Imamura et al. discussed above with respect to independent claim 1. Therefore, the asserted combination of Kuma et al. or Imamura et al. and Masataka (assuming these references may be combined, which Applicant does not admit) fails to establish *prima facie* obviousness of any pending claim.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claims 6 and 7 are clearly distinguishable over Kuma et al. or Imamura et al. in view of Masataka. Applicant submits that claims 6 and 7 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1, 2, 4, and 14. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

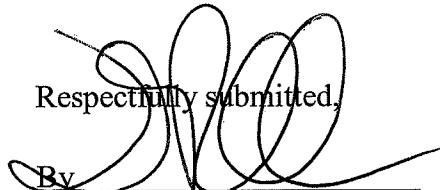
VI. Conclusion

All matters having been addressed in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the immediate allowance of all pending claims.

Applicants' undersigned representative remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this matter. If any point remains an issue in which the Examiner feels would be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account No. 02-2448. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any overpayments to the above-referenced deposit account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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